

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
January 16, 2002
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

The meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) was called to order on January 16, 2002 at 9:10 a.m. at Sacramento City Council Chambers, 915 I Street, Sacramento, California.

Members Present: Rod Diridon, Chairperson
 Leland Wong, Vice Chairperson
 Ernest A. Bates
 Ben L. Hom
 William E. Leonard
 Joseph E. Petrillo
 T.J. Stapleton

Members Absent: Jerry Epstein

Approval of Minutes for November 16, 2001 Meeting

Chairperson Diridon presented the minutes for approval. Member Stapleton moved to approve the November 16, 2001 meeting minutes. Member Wong seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 7-0.

Authority Members' Meetings for Compensation

Chairperson Diridon presented the list of meetings for compensation. Member Hom moved to approve the list. Member Leonard seconded the motion, which carried 7-0.

Members' Report

Chairperson Diridon reported on his activities during the month of January. Chairperson Diridon noted that David Valenstein of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) was present at the meeting. Mr. Valenstein read a January 14, 2002 letter from Mark E. Yachmetz, Associate Administrator for Railroad Development of the FRA. The letter was addressed to Executive Director Mehdi Morshed of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority). The letter stated the fiscal year 2002/2003 U.S. Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act includes a total of \$5.9 million for high-speed rail corridor planning activities, including \$1.25 million earmarked specifically for the California Corridor. These funds are provided pursuant to the Swift Act (Title 49 U.S.C. Section 26101), which provides grants and requires a 50% state match. The letter further stated the FRA wishes to make these appropriated funds available to the Authority in a timely manner and directed attention to where the required grant application package can be found.

Chairperson Diridon reported that both Edward Jordan, Private Industry Rail Executive and former Chairperson of the Authority, and Paul Bartlett, a pioneer Broadcaster in the Central Valley and of the LA-Fresno-Bay Area-Sacramento High Speed Rail Corridor Study Group, passed away last month and therefore this meeting will be dedicated to them.

Public Comment

Assemblyman Phil Wyman

Assemblyman Wyman reported he had sent a letter to U.S. Transportation Secretary Mineta requesting his support for federal funds to complete the Authority's environmental studies. Assemblyman Wyman expressed his support for the proposed route through the Antelope Valley and submitted a letter stating the reasons for his support of the Antelope Valley alignment.

Steve Cohn, Sacramento City Councilmember

Councilmember Cohn expressed Sacramento's enthusiasm for the proposed high-speed rail project. He reported the Sacramento City Council passed a resolution of support for the high-speed rail environmental alternatives contained in the Authority's First Draft Screening Report Part 2 and the City Council's

preference for the downtown Sacramento intermodal station. The City of Sacramento is currently in the process of working with Union Pacific; Regional Transit; the Capitol Corridor Board; Amtrak; Caltrans and other stakeholders to develop an intermodal station proposal for the downtown Sacramento station location.

Supervisor Roger Dickinson

Sacramento County Supervisor Dickinson expressed his support for the UP Depot as the high-speed rail connection and multi-modal transportation hub in downtown Sacramento. Supervisor Dickinson submitted a letter stating his support.

Chairperson Diridon announced and introduced newly appointed Authority member, Mr. Joseph Petrillo. Member Petrillo was appointed by Governor Davis on January 4, 2002. Chairperson Diridon also announced Governor Gray Davis appointed Dr. Ernest Bates to serve as a member of the High-Speed Rail Authority. Member Bates served as a Senate appointed Board Member of the Authority prior to being appointed by Governor Gray Davis.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Mehdi Morshed welcomed and congratulated the two new Authority members appointed by Governor Davis, Dr. Ernest Bates and Mr. Joseph Petrillo. Executive Director Morshed reported on the Authority's budget. The Governor's proposed FY2002-2003 state budget provides \$7 million for the Authority to continue the environmental review process. Once the budget is passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, the funds will be made available to the Authority. In the interim, the Authority will refine the work program for the consultants to proceed. The Authority will work with FRA and the Department of Finance to acquire the \$1.25 million federal funds to use during this fiscal year. This fiscal year, the Authority's budget is about \$3.5 million, which includes a \$1 appropriation from legislature, \$2 million from Caltrans for work in the LOSSAN corridor, and \$.5 million from Proposition 116. Despite the fact that the Authority has not received all of the state funding it has requested to continue the environmental work, the project has not been delayed. Executive Director Morshed stated after the Board votes on the screening recommendations, staff will work with FRA to define all of the work program to complete the next phase, and then will meet with the consultants regarding the budget and report back to the board. Executive Director Morshed reported based on meetings with the Central Valley consultant, it seems the Central Valley team will be able to draw up a work plan and complete the work. Executive Director Morshed stated he will keep the Board informed as negotiations progress. The next Authority Board meeting is scheduled for February 20, in San Diego at SANDAG Headquarters. The following Board meeting is scheduled for March 20, in San Francisco. The annual meeting of High-Speed Ground Transportation Association (HSGTA) will be May 21-24 in Orlando, Florida. The Europe Expo is October 23-25 in Madrid, Spain. If any of the members wish to attend the HSGTA or the Europe Expo, please inform the staff and we will process your request. Executive Director Morshed also reported the Authority has received positive media coverage, noting the articles sent with the book items, including an article by George Skelton of the Los Angeles Times.

Adoption of Ethics Training Policy

Chairperson Diridon called upon Deputy Attorney General Christine Sproul. Deputy Attorney General Sproul reported Government Code section 11146 et seq., requires officials in public office take a brief ethics-training course and certify that they have done so. The policy is straightforward and currently requires such training every two years. Chairperson Diridon called upon Deputy Attorney General George Spanos. Deputy Attorney General Spanos stated he reviewed the policy drafted by staff. Member Stapleton moved to approve the adoption of the ethics training policy and Member Leonard seconded the motion, which carried 7-0.

Tunneling Summit Report

Chairperson Diridon called upon Deputy Director Dan Leavitt. Deputy Director Leavitt presented an overview of the staff and consultant technical conference hosted by the Authority on December 3-4, 2001. Kip Field, Parsons Brinckerhoff presented a summary of specific findings and conclusions that were drawn from the conference. The Tunneling Summit Report may be found on the Authority's website, www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Quantm Alignment Optimization Report

Kip Field, Parsons Brinckerhoff, and Dave Haycock, Quantm, presented a report summarizing the methodology used and results of the optimization task. The Quantm Alignment Optimization Report may be found on the Authority's website, www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Public Comment

Dan McNamara, Train Riders Association of California

Mr. McNamara concurred with the thought of avoiding tunneling at all costs. He further expressed he felt there was insufficient reason to research a 3.5% grade, because any partnership, whether with the French, Japanese or Spanish, would likely ask for a 5% grade. Therefore he requested the Authority to have Quantm conduct a study on a 5% grade.

Senator Jim Costa

Senator Costa congratulated Members Petrillo and Bates on their appointment to the Board. Senator Costa commended the Authority its work and expressed his support and commitment to the proposed high-speed rail project. He vowed to continue to work towards additional funding for the high-speed rail project.

First Screening Report – Part 2 (Draft)

Executive Director Morshed directed attention to Deputy Director Carrie Pourvahidi. Deputy Director Pourvahidi presented staff recommendations for alignments and station locations for the Sacramento-Bakersfield corridor to the Board for approval. A conditional revision is the elimination of the Camanche Point connector. This revision is conditional on the passing of agenda item #10. The First Screening Report – Part 2 (Draft) may be found on the Authority's website, www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Revisions to First Screening Report – Part 1 (Draft)

Chairperson Diridon directed attention to Deputy Director Leavitt. Deputy Director Leavitt presented staff recommendations for alignments, station locations and high-speed train systems for further investigation in the LA Union Station/Southeast LA County to LAX segment of the Los Angeles-Orange County-San Diego corridor to the Board for approval. A revision includes the elimination of the SR-163 alternative from Mira Mesa to San Diego. The First Screening Report – Part 1 (Draft) may be found on the Authority's website, www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Revisions to Mountain Crossing Recommendations (San Jose-to-Merced and Bakersfield-to-Sylmar segments)

Chairperson Diridon directed attention to Executive Director Morshed. Executive Director Morshed presented background information. Executive Director directed attention to Deputy Director Dan Leavitt. Deputy Director Leavitt presented a revised screening report for the San Jose-Merced segment of the Bay Area-to-Merced corridor. Deputy Director Pourvahidi presented a revised screening report for the Bakersfield-Sylmar segment of the Bakersfield-Los Angeles corridor. The Revisions to Mountain Crossing Recommendations (San Jose-to-Merced and Bakersfield-to-Sylmar segments) may be found on the Authority's website, www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Chairperson invited Deputy Attorney General Sproul and David Valenstein, FRA to comment on the staff recommendations. Mr. Valenstein offered a word of caution to stick to the principles of feasibility and not be swayed politically in order to accomplish an adequate draft EIR/EIS document. He stated using the Quantm technology has helped to further define alternatives and to provide further basis for screening decisions but he noted the FRA would not be comfortable with eliminating additional alternatives at this time. Deputy Attorney General Sproul concurred with Mr. Valenstein's comments, including the comment concerning further elimination of alternatives at this time. Chairperson Diridon inquired about the Authority's legal ability to eliminate either the Antelope Valley corridor or the I-5 corridor. Deputy Attorney General Sproul stated she does not see an appropriate basis for elimination. Mr. Valenstein stated it is not appropriate at this time to eliminate either of the two corridors.

Public Comment**Harvey L. Hall, Mayor of Bakersfield**

Mayor Hall expressed his support of the high-speed rail project. Mayor Hall encouraged the Authority to work with Amtrak and stated his preference for the San Joaquin Valley corridor alignment. He stated he supports the Authority's decision to eliminate Maglev. Mayor Hall also expressed his support of a downtown Bakersfield station location.

James C. Ledford, Mayor of Palmdale

Mayor Ledford expressed his support of the Antelope Valley corridor alignment.

Rick Norris, Palmdale City Councilmember

Councilmember Norris expressed his support of the Antelope Valley corridor alignment.

Sheldon Sloan

Mr. Sloan expressed his support of the Antelope Valley corridor alignment.

Robert Schaevitz

Mr. Schaevitz, a consultant speaking on behalf of the City of Palmdale, expressed his support of the Antelope Valley corridor alignment.

Bob Madewell, City of Fresno

Mr. Madewell expressed support for the Panoche Pass alignment and a downtown Fresno station location along the Union Pacific corridor and an aqueduct alignment over the Tehachapis.

Dave Cross, Bakersfield Business Group

Mr. Cross expressed support for a downtown Bakersfield station location, near Amtrak.

Jason Hade, Kern Council of Governments

Mr. Hade expressed support for the Antelope Valley alignment.

Pat Moore, Sierra Club

Mr. Moore expressed support for a Stockton ACE station/express bypass track combination. He stated detours such as the Palmdale routing via the SR-58/SR-14/Soledad Canyon impose a time penalty on the majority of the proposed system users and threaten the system's economic viability. Furthermore providing direct service to Antelope Valley communities maybe unnecessary, since Metrolink offers rail service to Palmdale/Lancaster. Mr. Moore presented a resolution adopted by the Sierra Club. The resolution urges Governor Gray Davis, the California State Senate and Assembly and California House of Representatives members, Senators Feinstein and Boxer to fully fund the Authority to complete the EIR/EIS work and to purchase land for right-of-way preservation in the future.

Brian Stanke

Mr. Stanke commented on direct routing for tunnel alignments in the Bay Area to Merced corridor.

Marta Williamson, Oldtown Homeowners Group, Inc.

Ms. Williamson expressed her concern regarding the Palmdale station location. She stated the streets near the proposed site are always filled with children playing. Their safety and quality of life will be jeopardized with this project. The traffic has nowhere to go except through residential streets where children play and cross the street to reach a park. Ms. Williamson stated the Homeowners Group is not opposed to the high-speed rail project. However she urged the board to reconsider the Palmdale station location.

The Board discussed postponing the vote on items 8 through 10 and, as proposed in the draft Resolution, Determining Alternatives for Study in the Draft Program EIR/EIS for a Proposed California High-Speed Train System and Alternatives to be Eliminated from Further Study in the Draft Program EIR/EIS until Member Epstein could be present to vote. However, after receiving comments from FRA and the Attorney General's Office, the Board decided to proceed with a vote. Member Stapleton made a motion

to vote on items 8 through 10 as proposed in the draft resolution. Vice-Chairperson Wong seconded the motion, which carried 7-0.

Vice-Chairperson Wong moved to adopt the draft Resolution Determining Alternatives for Study in the Draft Program EIR/EIS for a Proposed California High-Speed Train System and Alternatives to be Eliminated from Further Study in the Draft Program EIR/EIS. The resolution reads as follows:

WHEREAS, the California High Speed Rail Authority has adopted a final Business Plan which describes a proposed high speed train system for California and describes general corridor alignments and general station locations, and has recommended that environmental review proceed for a proposed high speed train system for California;

WHEREAS, the California High Speed Rail Authority (the "Authority") has executed a Memorandum with the Federal Railroad Administration (the "FRA") which provides for the preparation of a Program EIR/EIS for a proposed California High Speed Train System;

WHEREAS, the Memorandum between the Authority and the FRA provides that the Authority will serve as the lead agency for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Federal Railroad Administration will serve as the lead agency for purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in preparing the Program EIR/EIS;

WHEREAS, the Authority issued a Notice of Preparation in compliance with CEQA and the FRA issued a Notice of Intent in compliance with NEPA indicating that a Program EIR/EIS is being prepared for a proposed California High Speed Train System and requesting comment from the public and public agencies;

WHEREAS, the Authority with the participation of the FRA has conducted a series of scoping meetings to receive comments from public agencies and the public, and has consulted with numerous public agencies, to help identify issues of concern, potential environmental impacts, and potential alternatives for study in the draft Program EIR/EIS for the proposed California High Speed Train System;

WHEREAS, the Authority has caused screening evaluation studies to be prepared which summarize information concerning potential alternatives for study in the draft Program EIR/EIS in comparison to the screening evaluation criteria and the performance criteria previously set forth by the Authority for a proposed California High Speed Train System;

WHEREAS on November 14, 2001, the Authority adopted a Resolution approving (with the exception of reserved portions) the First Screening Report, Part 1, s presented on November 14, 2001, and making initial determinations as to the corridors, stations and technologies to be considered as alternatives to be studied in the Draft EIR/EIS and those to be eliminated from further study in the Draft EIR/EIS;

WHEREAS, the Authority has reviewed the screening evaluation studies, the staff recommendations, and public and public agency comment on the Draft First Screening Report, Part 2, and the revised portions of the Draft First Screening Report, Part 1, and finds that they provide an appropriate basis for making additional screening decisions and determining appropriate alternatives to be studied in the draft Program EIR/EIS;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE California High Speed Rail Authority hereby takes the following actions:

- (1) approves the recommended general corridors and station locations as alternatives to be studied in the draft Program EIR/EIS for the proposed California High Speed Train System, reflected in the revised portions of the First Screening Report, Part 1, and presented January 16, 2002;**
- (2) approves the recommended general corridors and station locations as alternatives to be studied in the draft Program EIR/EIS for the proposed California High Speed Train System, reflected in the First Screening Report, Part 2, and presented January 16, 2002, concerning the segment from Sacramento to Bakersfield; and*
- (3) concurs in the recommended elimination of certain alternatives from further consideration for reasons of (a) inability to meet most of the basic project objectives or to meet the need for and purposes of the project; (b) infeasibility due to economic, technical or engineering, or environmental concerns; (c) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts; or (d) a combination of these factors, as reflected in the approved Screening Reports; ***
- (4) approves the First Screening Report, Parts 1 and 2, including Appendix A, and directs staff to proceed with the environmental review work for the proposed California High Speed Train System in accordance with the Authority's screening decisions; and*
- (5) directs staff to forward to the FRA for its consideration and concurrence the Authority's additional screening decisions as presented in this Resolution.*

**Concerning the mountain crossings in Northern California (San Jose to Merced segment) and in Southern California (Bakersfield to Sylmar segment via Hwy I-5 and via SR58/Soledad Canyon), and the Union Station-LAX portion of the LOSSAN segment.*

***Including removal of the SR 163 option from LA-San Diego (Inland) segment.*

Member Hom seconded the motion, which carried 7-0. A copy of said resolution is available on the Authority's website, www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Public Comment

Brian Stanke

Mr. Stanke requested an extension of the high-speed rail system's eastern San Francisco Bay from Oakland to an Emeryville terminus at the November 14th board meeting. He requested an update on the feasibility work the Authority has done in reference to his suggestion of an Emeryville station location.

Maria Contreras-Sweet, Secretary of Business, Transportation & Housing

Secretary Contreras-Sweet expressed the Governor's past and continued strong support of the Authority's program. The Secretary reported that \$7 million was included in the Governor's proposed FY2002-2003 State Budget for the Authority technical studies. She informed the Board Members that Executive Director Morshed has kept her fully briefed on the Authority's progress and pledged the support of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m. in honor of Paul Bartlett and Ed Jordan.